



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO
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San Diego Public Library

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Library Hosts Major Contemporary Drawing Exhibition *Works by Twelve San Diego-Area Artists to be Featured*

SAN DIEGO – “The 8th Annual Invitational Drawing Show,” an important exhibition of contemporary drawings by artists residing in San Diego County, opens July 21 at the Earl & Birdie Taylor/Pacific Beach Branch Library. It will run through October 19. A reception for the participating artists is planned for Sunday, July 27, from 1 to 4 p.m. The exhibition and reception are open to the public and admission is free.

Organized under the auspices of the San Diego Public Library’s Visual Arts Program, the Annual Drawing Shows are intended to showcase the ranges of artistic expression possible using drawing media. Another goal of these exhibitions is to highlight the importance of fundamental studio skills to the art-making process. Until recent decades, learning to draw was considered essential to an artist’s training, but subsequently fell out of favor due to the advent of theory-driven art, digital media, and other factors. Exhibition series similar to the Annual Drawing Shows are rare in the United States.

“The 8th Annual Invitational Drawing Show,” which features works by a dozen area artists, will undoubtedly rank as one of the most exciting and diverse exhibitions in the history of the Visual Arts Program. In previous years, the Annual Drawing Shows have focused almost exclusively on mid-career and older artists, in keeping with the mission of the Visual Arts Program. True to form, veterans of San Diego art scene like Ken Goldman, Neill Ketchum, Alexia Markarian, Herbert Olds, Richard Reyes, Robert Treat, and Michael Wheelden have created beautifully resolved works especially for this exhibition. However, for the first time, a group of younger artists (in their twenties and thirties), including Bill Canales, Joshua Eggleton, Scott R. Horsley, Clayton Llewellyn, and Colby Nichols make up nearly half of those represented. Their works are ambitious in scale, concept, and execution, reflecting prodigious talent and dedication. Those who follow the contemporary art scene will likely be elated by this vitality, especially in a world of new media where fundamentally skilled draftsmen continue to struggle for recognition.

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The artists participating in “The 8th Annual Invitational Drawing Show” are:

Bill Canales – Bill Canales’s love of drawing began in the third grade. Largely self-taught, Canales has been a tattoo artist for 16 years and cites Asian tattooing as a major influence. His skills have earned him several awards. The two nearly life-sized, graphically powerful works by Canales in “The 8th Annual” are drawings for “back pieces” and demonstrate his talent for creating large designs that integrate perfectly with the human form. Canales owns a tattoo studio in Ocean Beach and lives with his wife and daughter in the College area.

Joshua Eggleton – Meticulously rendered in graphite, Joshua Eggleton’s large-scale, representational drawings are surreal and autobiographical. Their themes, conveyed through imagery like power tools, construction rubble, and full-figure depictions of himself (some or all of these elements may be seen floating mid-air) relate to his work in the construction trades. Eggleton’s drawings have been exhibited in several important exhibitions and galleries nationwide. He received his MFA from the San Francisco Art Institute in 2007 and lives in Encanto Heights with his wife Xuchi, who is also an artist.

Ken Goldman – A dedicated artist and teacher, Ken Goldman is one of San Diego’s most popular realist painters and draftsmen. Goldman’s best known subjects are landscapes depicting the coastal areas of San Diego, but his true mastery emerges in his life drawings. Among Goldman’s works in this exhibition is a pair pastel drawings of pedigree rabbits, including *Calico II* pictured on the exhibition postcard. Technically and artistically, these works are stunning. Goldman lives and works with his wife, Stephanie (who is also a well known artist), in the Sports Arena area.

Scott R. Horsley – Currently an MFA candidate at UCSD (with an emphasis in drawing), Scott R. Horsley received a BFA from the Rhode Island School of Design. He created the largest drawing in the exhibition, executed in graphite on a single sheet of watercolor paper measuring four by nine feet. Titled *Disintercourse*, Horsley’s chilling work depicts two lines of dozens of figures “posing” in full-body-protective hazmat suits. The image, made all the more threatening by the elaborate breathing apparatus covering each individual’s head, is part of an ongoing series of dream-like drawings that explore the relationships between masculinity and technology in the context of sex, violence, and absurdity. Horsley is already being noticed by cutting-edge dealers and collectors locally and in Los Angeles. He is a resident of South Mission Beach.

Neill Ketchum – An accomplished printmaker and painter Neill Ketchum, is a resident of Fallbrook. She creates haunting, mixed-media drawings inspired by the rural, wooded areas of the surrounding countryside. Often these are augmented by subtle washes of color. In some works, creatures are barely visible in the underbrush or soaring through treetops. Ketchum earned a Master’s Degree in Art and a Ph.D. in art education, and has taught at the university level. Her large drawings in “The 8th Annual” are energetic and poetic.

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Clayton Llewellyn – Clayton Llewellyn’s astonishing imagery depicts worlds in which mechanical and organic forms have coalesced or morphed into grotesque entities. Sometimes Llewellyn’s scenarios seem futuristic, and at other times, they appear to depict a hellish, medieval underworld. In one odd pair of drawings, pouches of skin bulge with indeterminate contents. Another work, a large triptych, offers a panoramic view of a colony of mutated cylindrical whistles whose bubbles percolate upwards in a sea of green liquid. These reflect Llewellyn’s latest experiments with earth-toned, delicately tinted backgrounds suggesting antiquity or alien atmospheres of other planets. Llewellyn received his MFA in 2006 from the San Francisco Art Institute and teaches art-related courses at local colleges. Llewellyn’s drawings have been included in several prestigious exhibitions and publications. He lives in City Heights.

Alexia Markarian – Respected as one of the most distinctive artistic voices in the city, Alexia Markarian’s thought-provoking and irreverent drawings are populated by quirky, disenchanted figures operating on the fringes of sanity. In some ways, her drawings are even more immediate and visceral than her paintings which were the subject of a recent, critically acclaimed Visual Arts Program solo exhibition. Two books of Markarian’s drawings, published in conjunction with her solo exhibition at the library, will be available for purchase during the run of “The 8th Annual.” Markarian lives and works in La Mesa.

Colby Nichols – A designer and illustrator with a quirky sense of humor and edgy style that set him apart from other artists of his generation, Colby Nichols received his art education at the Art Institute of California, San Diego, in 2004. Nichols’ works comment on life in general and, according to the artist, “Every piece has a message and a story behind it.” Two of Nichols’ drawings in “The 8th Annual” deal with episodes of vertigo he recently suffered. Nichols, age 25, is the youngest artist in this exhibition. He is a resident of Rancho Bernardo.

Herbert Olds – Herbert Olds has been described as one of the most important representational artists of his generation. Professor Emeritus of Art from Carnegie Mellon University where he taught for thirty years, Olds’ skills rival those of Van Eyck, Dürer, Rembrandt, Ingres, Degas, and other masters from whom he has derived much of his spiritual and technical inspiration over the years. Olds’ most ambitious drawings are large, compositionally complex works featuring the human figure (often himself), animals, objects, abstract passages, and even collaged elements. However, he’s not above spending months drawing subjects as lowly as plucked, trussed chickens ready for the oven in a roasting pan. Olds works and lives in Pacific Beach.

Richard Reyes – The dark, irreverent subjects depicted in the highly polished graphite drawings of Richard Reyes delight cynics and outrage traditionalists. Primarily self-taught, Reyes began drawing at age five to compensate for a severe stutter. Heavily influenced by graphic novels, comic books, and black and white movies, his style and outlook fuse an impeccable technique with an undercurrent of psychological unrest. A major Reyes drawing project that took him a year was illustrating the children’s classic *Peter Pan*, but in a manner that preserved the disturbing and violent nature of the original. Reyes’ drawings in “The 8th Annual” comment on U.S. politics. Reyes lives in Hillcrest.

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Robert Treat – Robert Treat is one of the region’s foremost practitioners and teachers of painting in the medium of encaustic (pigmented beeswax). His large abstract paintings are prized for their elegance, challenging imagery, and technical complexity. Treat’s myriad influences include nature and natural forms; children’s art; folk and tribal art; cave paintings; and modern masters like Willem de Kooning, Robert Motherwell, and Richard Diebenkorn. Always experimenting with different material and processes, Treat recently produced an extraordinary series of drawings using encaustic, gouache, and ink. The artist’s sensitivity to materials can be traced back to his endeavors as a printmaker early in his career. Treat lives in Normal Heights.

Michael Wheelden – Michael Wheelden is an artist and art teacher in area colleges. Wheelden’s signature works are paintings of ordinary, architecturally mundane buildings (otherwise known as “vernacular architecture”) commonly found in area neighborhoods. The artist deconstructs and reassembles images of these structures into elaborately engineered, meticulously executed paintings whose components fit together like three-dimensional jigsaw puzzles. Although Wheelden is regarded as a painter, he’s an extraordinary draftsman whose drawings range from classically oriented nudes to tightly rendered studies for paintings. Wheelden’s drawings on canvas resemble his paintings, but the images are more monochromatic and linear. Wheelden holds regular drawing sessions for artists in his University Heights residence and studio.

Additional information on the current exhibition and the Visual Arts Program are available on the Library’s website at <http://www.sandiego.gov/public-library/services/visualarts.shtml>

The Pacific Beach/Taylor Library is open seven days a week and is located at 4275 Cass Street. Library hours are: Mondays and Wednesdays, 12:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.; Tuesdays and Thursdays, 9:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.; Fridays, 12:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.; Saturdays, 9:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.; and Sundays, 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. The library phone number for the general public is (858) 581-9934. .

The San Diego Public Library’s Visual Arts Program is a nationally recognized series of exhibitions, lectures, a television program, and other art-related activities. The mission of the Program is to demonstrate the Library’s role as a cultural institution embracing a broad range of disciplines, while assisting San Diego’s mid-career and older professional artists in achieving wider local, regional, and national attention. Visual Arts Program exhibitions are made possible, in part, by contributions from individuals, volunteer efforts, and the Friends of Central Library. For more information about “The 8th Annual Invitational Drawing Show” or the Visual Arts Program, the public can contact the library curator at (619) 238-6627 or visit the Library’s website at www.sandiegolibrary.org

Learn about other events at the San Diego Public Library’s Central Library and 35 branches, find links to numerous additional resources, or search for materials in the Library’s catalog online at www.sandiegolibrary.org

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